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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/678,738	10/02/2003	William Banning Vail III	WEAT/0524	6117

7590 04/25/2005

William B. Patterson
MOSER, PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
Suite 1500
3040 Post Oak Blvd.
Houston, TX 77056

EXAMINER

TSAY, FRANK

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3672

DATE MAILED: 04/25/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/678,738

Applicant(s)

VAIL ET AL.

Examiner

Frank S Tsay

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 February 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,6,14 and 42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,6,14 and 42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 02 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosures filed on 4/14/04, 6/17/04, 7/26/04, 7/30/04 and 1/21/05 have been acknowledged, considerations of the information disclosures have been postponed for failing to comply with requirements under 37CFR 1.56(a)(2) and 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3)(i), which require applicants to carefully examine the **closest information** over which individuals associated with the filing or prosecution of a patent application believe any pending claim patentably defines, to make sure that any material information contained therein is disclosed to the Office. It is also requires that any information disclosure statement under 1.97 shall include a concise explanation of the relevance as it is presently understood by the individual designated in 1.56(c) most knowledgeable about the content of the information, of each patent, publication, or other information listed that is not in the English language. Furthermore judging the large amount of references cited in the application, it is incomprehensible that each of them was deemed closely related to pending claimed invention, therefore in response to this office action, applicant is advised to further identify a reasonable numbers of the cited references for the examiner's further considerations.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

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(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 6, 14, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Knudson (US 3,945,444).

Knudson teaches casing drilling using split bit, which comprises all of the claimed structure including an outer tubular means 16 which can be comprised of standard well casings (col. 2, lines 37-45), a drill assembly 48 which is selectively connected at the lower end of drill string (see Fig. 1). The drill assembly can be withdrawn by standard wireline operation leaving the outer tubular means or casing in the wellbore for well completion (Col. 2, lines 40-45, and col. 7, lines 7+). The method of placing physically alterable bonding material in the annulus and establishing hydrostatic pressure in the wellbore for allowing the bonding material to alter under hydrostatic pressure is anticipated by col. 2, lines 37-45, where the casing is to be remained in the wellbore for well completion operation, which is known to have cement slurry pumped downhole through the tubular out to the annulus between the casing and the wellbore and cured under hydrostatic pressure, since hydrostatic pressure generated by the fluid column is a natural phenomenon. The methods of stabilizing the drilling string and centralizing the casing portion fail to render patentable distinction over Knudson, since such are of

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common drilling operational practice which are known to one of the ordinary skill in the art.

Claims 1, 6, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Brown (US 3,552,507).

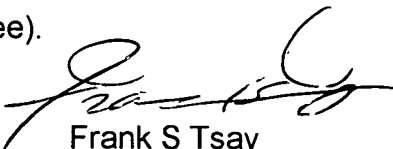
Specifically see Fig. 1B, where casing C, retrievable drill bit assembly A and stabilizer means S are shown.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Frank S Tsay whose telephone number is (517) 272-7038. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday, 7:30am-5:00 pm, 2nd Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David J Bagnell can be reached on (517)272-6999. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

4/15/05



Frank S Tsay
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3672